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Warning / Indications Sub
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9 June 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, COMOR

SUBJECT : Proposed Work Plan for an Indications Working Group

1. The basic objective of an Indications Working Group (IWG) in the COMOR mechanism would be to ensure that the potential of reconnaissance systems and techniques to contribute to strategic warning of hostile enemy action is fully exploited and that the needs of the community for warning intelligence are taken into account in the development and deployment of new reconnaissance systems. In this latter context, it will be necessary for an Indications Working Group to be fully aware of oncoming technological advances and new sensor capabilities and their supporting communications and exploitation techniques and requirements.

2. When sufficient progress has been made in coming to grips with the basic strategic warning problem in reconnaissance terms, the IWG should turn its attention to investigating the potential of reconnaissance systems, present and prospective, to support intelligence activities in other types of crisis situations--limited, localized wars, insurrections, coups and sustained insurgencies. It may be that some of the procedures and techniques considered for strategic warning may be adaptable to other situations as well.

3. In dealing with strategic warning, the IWG might consider a program similar to the following stages:

a. Review what has already been done in this field, e.g.,

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b. Review the USIB General Indicator List to identify and locate ground targets where indicative activities might be observed. Descriptions of such activities in reconnaissance terms could form the base for a Reconnaissance Indicator List, which with the targets above would provide a framework for a Warning Reconnaissance Plan.

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c. Study existing photography of indications targets, working with qualified photo-interpreters, to determine if, in fact, indicative behavior could be observed and at what ground resolutions. A parallel determination should be made as to the size of sample required for various targets and activities at them; how many crowded forward bases would have to be seen to convey a fairly clear impression of hostile abnormality. As you are aware, there are a great number of possible permutations and trade offs and combinations of unusual activities at several dissimilar indications targets which would suffice to convey warning. The size of one activity sample could be reduced very considerably by concurrent detection of other abnormalities at other and different indicator localities.

d. Lay down the outlines of NPIC-NIC collaboration in gathering baseline data on activity levels at various types of targets and in establishing a joint NPIC-NIC Indications Readout Team to develop the same sort of target familiarity and sophisticated interpretation as has been brought to bear on AE, missile, submarine and other readout. This team should review each mission to maintain target familiarity and search for potential indications bonus targets.

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f. Develop other programs to be used in other crises as discussed in paragraph 2 above.

g. Study the implications in improvements

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with a view to selecting the best mix or sequence of coverages for alerting or warning purposes. Similarly, study the progressive problems that can be expected from increasingly prompt readout

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
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h. Begin examining techniques required for greater integration and correlation of reconnaissance yields with those from COMINT and ELINT, with specific reference to indicative activities by the enemy.

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5. This proposed work plan would add considerable assurance for the policy-makers that intelligence resources were being efficiently managed for warning purposes as well as for other intelligence needs.

 James J. Hitchcock
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